724

P800124-2112

United States Senate
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

ACTION
Is assigned to
EA

September 9, 1980

The Honorable
Edmund S. Muskie
Secretary of State
Washington, D. C. 20520

Dear Ed:

I am writing to express my deep concern that the Administration may have given the impression in the Republic of Korea that it condones the anti-democratic policies of the Chun government. It is particularly distressing, in this connection, that the ill-advised comments of General Wikham -- if they were correctly reported in the Korean press -- have not been specifically and emphatically disavowed.

I understand that the Administration has expressed its concern regarding developments in South Korea and has taken certain other specific actions to underscore its displeasure with the latest assault on democracy in a country that we rescued from communist totalitarianism a generation ago. Nevertheless, information that I have obtained from a number of sources indicates that the Administration, either intentionally or inadvertently, has left the impression in both government and opposition circles in South Korea that President Chun and his anti-democratic proclivities are not seriously opposed in Washington and that meaningful American pressure for reforms is not to be expected.

I very much hope and urge that the Administration will make it abundantly clear that it expects the Chun government to improve its record on human rights and will schedule free elections soon. In this regard, the blatantly political trial of Mr. Kim Dae-jung and other opposition leaders is crucial. The United States ought to make it clear that this trial is a critical test of American-Korean relations. The American Ambassador should request permission to attend the trial; and he should be recalled to Washington if Mr. Kim and his colleagues are not freed.

With every good wish.

Ever sincerely,

Claiborne Pell

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY HT DATE 8/18/82
RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE
TS AUTH. REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED ☐ RELEASABLE ☒
RELEASE DENIED ☐
FA or FOI EXEMPTIONS